

[Department Store]

Beliefs & Customs - Folkstuff

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Title ...By him was a regular department store

Place of origin N.Y. Date 3/22/39

Project worker Terry Roth

Project editor

Remarks Form C with text 8156 [2 ?]

FOLKLORE

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NEW YORK Forms to be Filled out for Each Interview

FORM A Circumstances of Interview

STATE New York

NAME OF WORKER Terry Roth ——— Sam Schwartz

ADDRESS 47 W. 69th Street, N.Y.C. 152 W. 13th Street, N.Y.C.

DATE March 22, 1939

SUBJECT By Him Was A Regular Department Store

1. Date and time of interview March 15th - Noon
2. Place of interview Louis Wiesen & Son, Dresses 463 Seventh Avenue New York City
3. Name and address of informant Mr. Gold
4. Name and address of person, if any, who put you in touch with informant. Sam Schwartz
5. Name and address of person, if any, accompanying you
Sam Schwartz
6. Description of room, house, surroundings, etc.

FOLKLORE

NEW YORK

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FORM C Text of Interview (Unedited)

STATE New York

NAME OF WORKER Terry Roth ——— Sam Schwartz

ADDRESS 47 W. 69th Street, N.Y.C. 153 W. 13th Street, N.Y.C.

DATE March 22, 1939

SUBJECT By Him Was A Regular Department Store By HIM WAS A REGULAR
DEPARTMENT STORE

"I remind myself of a shop on East Broadway. Was a lonsmon, used to work over there. A cloakmaker! At that time I was living on Henry Street. Naturally, there was a President of the shul. And the boss from his shop, he was also the President. He practically didn't pay the people anything for their work. The cheapest labor he used to have.

After they are working a long time, they used to come over for a raise. Everyone HAS to belong to a shul. So THEY are belonging also to his shul. So they say to him.

"How is it about a raise?"

"Oh," he says, "times in bad. How can I raise you? I'm losing money. If you want the truth, I should lay you all off. But, after all, aren't you my lonsmon? If we don't look out for our own, who else? I'll tell you what. Next Saturday, come to the shul and I'll give you an "aleah."*

*Aleah- The honor of being [sum oned?] to ascend the rostrum in the shul an the torah is read. A "Treat" to a Torah reading.

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You think that's all he was? I SHOULD KNOW. He was a 2 regular department store. Also he is an agent to sell tickets on the boat to bring over the wives. Or, let us say, someone was bringing over a family. So he was selling tickets for the boat. He used to take over the "greenas."

The wages at that time, for a cloakmaker was fifteen dollars. By him, you used to work for seven or five dollars. After this lonsmon is working for sometime, all the shops are starting to unionize. The boss is having trouble in the shop and the workers are not wanting an "aleah." After this don't help, he calls over Chiam. "How long you're here? Why don't you bring over your wife? By me, it's NO LIFE if a family is in two pieces. You think it's right, Chiam?" "How can I" my friend says. "You think maybe I can save from those wages?" "Alright. So I'll tell you what I'll do. I'll give you a ticket. And I'll take out of the wages." So already he had the cloakmaker tied again to work another year. And after the cloakmaker got mad he used to say to the boss. "I have you in Hell with the tickets."***** Strikes used to be there at that time and by him also. When he saw it's bad, he comes down to the shop. First he would get a telegram, made by himself to him. WITH A STORY. That someone's daughter is sock sick , or maybe the shul in the old country is burning. Or something like that. He called them all together and told them what is happening. "And I am giving for this prupose purpose unless I'll have to give 10% more wages."

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Well. THEY WERE INVOLVED. After all, in the old country is still their fathers, mothers, brothers. So they start to work again. Always he had some craziness to keep them. But when they are no longer "greenas" they used to say to him. "We have you in Hell, with the shul, with the tickets, with your beard, with everything."
